

INTELLOFAX 8

## INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO

COUNTRY Korea

DATE DISTR 12 Mar 52

SUBJECT Food Production, Taxation, and Distribution in North Korea

NO. OF PAGES 7

PLACE  
ACQUIRED

25X1

NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW)DATE OF  
INFO.

25X1

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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Harvests in North Korea

1. Crop results in Hwanghae Province were average, so far as the field (dry) crops were concerned, by early September 1951, but the rice harvest was very poor, and it was estimated that it would be about 60 percent of the harvest for an average year. In September the price of one bu<sup>1</sup> of rice was about 1,000 North Korean won. In the areas of

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Document No. 9

No Change in Class. ☒☐ Declassified

Class. Changed To: TS S C 25X1

Auth.: HR 70-2

Date: 17 SEP 1978

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SECURITY INFORMATION  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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the province near the 38th parallel, only 50 percent of the required amount of fertilizer was distributed to the farmers; four bags were supplied each ten households.

2. Fertilizer was not available in the Kyongsong-gun (129-41, 41-40) (EB 5713) area of North Korea in 1951, and the transplanting of the rice seedlings was completed by the mobilization of the entire population in each village. There was little work for the village people's committee except supervision of agricultural collection, mobilization of labor for road repair, and routine affairs. Farmers in the area estimate the 1951 crop will be about 75 percent of that in a normal year.
3. The harvest in North Korea for 1951 in areas north of the 39th parallel, where teams composed of seven or eight households harvested the crops of all, was about 40 percent of the harvest in 1950. The best crops were soy beans, red beans, and buckwheat. In areas south of the 39th parallel the harvest was only about 20 percent of that in 1950 (C-4). About 50 percent of the rice crop was collected by the government as taxes-in-kind, while another 20 percent was demanded by the government as relief rice for refugees. Fruit and vegetables were also subject to a tax-in-kind levy. After the harvest of the 1951 crops, only seeds for crops maturing in the spring and summer of 1952 were sown on fields south of the 39th parallel (C-6).

#### Taxation of Farm Products

4. In North Korea in 1947, the tax-in-kind rate was 25 percent of the rice harvest of each household. The rate in 1948 was raised to 28 percent because the collection in that year and the years following was made in unpolished rice, and the cleaning expense was added in the percentage. The 1949 rate, established in proportion to the total arable land held by the farmer, rose to 30 percent. In 1950, the rate was established on a different basis. Each village was assigned a certain quota of commodities to be met by taxes-in-kind, the quota of each household being assigned by examiners who investigated actual crop conditions and the likely total production. Most of the examiners, however, being ardent Communists, showed favoritism to some and discriminated against others; many farmers were assigned taxes which were 40 to 60 percent of their actual crop. In 1950 about 6,000,000 bags of rice, each bag containing 200 bushels, and 3,000,000 bags of other grain, each containing about 210 bushels, were collected by the North Korean government. These grains were used for payment of rice rations to local and central government officials, contributions to military units, and export. For the last purpose, unpolished and uncleaned rice was used.
5. Beginning in 1951, the tax was applied to all crops. Further, each household in 1951 was required to pay the following membership fees for the Democratic Youth Alliance, Democratic Women's Alliance, and the North Korean Labor Party, if members; village affairs fee; school fee; public health fee; donations of rice, cotton, and other farm products such as straw sandals to the North Korean army. Sometimes payment might be made in money instead of rice or other commodities. In July farmers in the Pyongyang area had estimated that about 40 percent of their crops would be collected for taxes, but feared that actually almost all of their crops would be collected by the government, unconditionally, since the rate of taxation had not yet been fixed. A member of the propaganda Section of the North Korean Labor Party Central Committee said in July 1951 that the rate of rice taxation in Kangwon and Hwanghae Provinces might be reduced slightly in 1951, but that the usual rate would apply

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in the remaining five provinces. He said that about 96 percent of the tax would be collected during 1951. Some farmers interpreted these remarks to mean that actually about 80 percent of their crops would be taken as taxes in 1951. No food, however, was being supplied the Chinese Communist forces in Korea by the North Korean government (C-5). The Central Committee stressed in its propaganda that the Chinese Communist forces were bringing in their own food, and that farmers should willingly contribute their production, since if a food shortage should arise, grain could be imported from Manchuria later.<sup>2</sup>

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6. In the Sinhun-myon (125-44, 38-20) (XC 6844) area in July, residents were being required to pay as a tax-in-kind the following percentages of their farm products: rice, 25 percent, to be packed in straw bags, the cost of the packing to be borne by the taxpayer; other cereals and vegetables, 23 percent; and fruit, 25 percent, packed in straw bags at the expense of the taxpayer. The determination of the harvest of each household was being made by one of the team of seven appraisers nominated by the people's committee in each village and supposedly approved at a meeting of the villagers. The usual procedure they followed in cereals was to examine a sample plot from each household and estimate that household's total production. Orchard owners merely reported an estimate of their year's crop, and this was generally approved by the appraisers. While some early vegetables were used by the farm families, they had less interest in this crop, since it was likely to be taken entirely or largely for use by North Korean army units in their vicinity.
7. North Korean authorities in the Yonbaek-gun (126-09, 37-56) (11-3002) area, backed by North Korean troops, in early November were collecting from farmers taxes-in-kind amounting to 25 percent of the total estimated harvest and, in addition, 50 percent of the estimated crop in the name of a government grain-storage program. The propaganda explanation for this collection was that there was danger that United Nations forces would land in the area and confiscate or destroy the crops, and that therefore the North Korean government was keeping it in safe custody until it could be redistributed to the people later. The actual reason for the heavy levies in this area was that the North Korean authorities feared the zone might pass under United Nations control and that therefore the grain would be lost. Actually farmers in this area, although supposedly permitted to keep 25 percent of their crops for immediate disposition, were suffering from a food shortage, since the 25 percent and 50 percent levies were based upon the estimated, rather than the actual, harvest.<sup>3</sup>
8. In addition to paying the taxes-in-kind on food, which amounted to about 27 percent of the crops, farmers in the Yongamp'o (124-22, 39-56) (XE 1721) vicinity in mid-1951 expected to make donations and other taxes which would leave them with about one-half of their peacetime amount. One middle-class farming family in the area, for example, relies on the salary of the husband, an official of the Fatherland Defense Society, plus income from what grass mats they can make in their spare time. Of the husband's salary of 1100 won monthly, he received less than 400 won in cash; 400 won was taken for a monthly food ration for himself alone, 270 won was allotted for his cigarette ration, and there was a fee of 100 won which must be paid back to the society. Taxes were the most unpopular government measure in the Yongamp'o area; it was almost impossible to escape payment, and if payment was delayed, interest was charged.

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Distribution to Military and Civilian Elements

9. In Sansu-ryon (125-57, 38-30) (YC 5765) in July there were stock-piled about 1,000 straw bags of rice, 200 bags of beans, and 200 bags of millet, which had been taken from the tax-in-kind collections and allocated for the use of the Chinese Communist and North Korean armies and governmental organizations. Grains were being transported to this area daily by ox-cart and hand-cart from every county in Huanghae Province. Rice was supplied daily to individuals in various categories according to the following ration schedule:

North Korean and Chinese Communist troops	: 900 grams of white rice
Military Mobilization Department employees	: 800 grams of white rice
Laborers and technicians employed on government work	: 900 grams of white rice
Social Security Ministry employees	: 700 grams of white rice
Police employees and teachers	: 700 grams of white rice
Other government employees	: 600 grams, half white rice and half other grains
Members of families of military dead	: 300 grams, half white rice
Refugees	: 300 grams, half white rice

10. On 30 June 1951 the North Korean cabinet issued Cabinet Directive No. 730 on the supply of foodstuffs for wounded soldiers returning to their homes. According to the directive, such demobilized soldiers were to be furnished without charge 600 grams of grain each per day. Cabinet Directive No. 737, issued on 13 July, ordered free distribution of fatigues and footwear to demobilized and wounded soldiers assigned to various governmental agencies for employment. Farmers who were made refugees by the war were to be issued a loan of 600 grams of food per day from the "national stockpile" of food by the chairman of the provincial people's committee concerned, such loan to be repaid. The issue was to be made to farm laborers only until September 1951.

11. Farm households support the North Korean armed forces in various ways. In Huanghae Province in July 1950 each household was required to make two uniforms from material supplied by the army, and on various holidays, such as 1 May, 25 June, and 15 August, most households send presents such as soap, towels, and cigarettes in kits to the army. Vegetables for side-dishes are provided North Korean troops by residents of the areas in which they are billeted through the activities of the local Democratic Women's Alliance. The residents are also encouraged to provide straw sandals voluntarily for their troops.

12. A Chinese Communist troop unit of 400 men was receiving a daily ration of food from the tax-in-kind collected on the spot by the Osong-ryon (124-34, 42-02) (YE 3432) people's committee in September 1951. Another Chinese Communist unit of 1,000 men was receiving a similar ration from the grain collected as tax by the Mansi (125-14, 39-53) (YE 5117) people's committee.

13. North Korean Cabinet Directive No. 743 of 19 July 1951 ordered that in lands confiscated under Cabinet Decision No. 190, if seeds had already been planted on the land when confiscated, taxes-in-kind were to be paid from the crop. Half of the remaining produce was then to be turned over to the government, and this was to be done whether or not the land had been entrusted to individuals or organizations for cultivation and harvest.

14. In September 1951, a security unit of the North Korean army sent teams of from three to five men to each village in Yenbuck-gun (126-07, 37-56) (BT 5002) to collect food supplies, which were then shipped north by ox-cart.

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Each farm household was required to furnish the following: 80 percent of the millet harvested and rice, radishes, and red pepper in varying quantities. In the Ongjin peninsula areas, the Democratic Women's Alliance in September was encouraging the payment of taxes and the mobilization of cattle for agricultural purposes, and collecting sauce, red pepper powder, bean curd, and other foods from each house for winter use by the North Korean army in the vicinity. In the summer, the alliance had collected vegetables. The tax-in-kind on wheat was about 90 percent, on barley 50 to 70 percent, and on millet about 60 percent.

#### Pricing and Channels of Sale

15. Minimum prices at which soap products collected as taxes-in-kind were to be sold to commercial agencies by the government were established by the chairman of the North Korean National Planning Board on 12 July 1951 as follows:

Broom corn, large mal	620 won
Indian corn, large mal	750 won
Apples, per kilogram	35 won
Other fruit, per kilogram	35 won

Commercial agencies which received these products from the Food Administration Bureau at the minimum prices were to report their sales and turn over to the government treasury the difference between the prices they paid and the market price. The planning Board authorized the chairman of each provincial people's committee to fix the market prices of the goods in accordance with current market conditions in the area concerned.

16. In late September 1951 in the Hamhung area refugees were receiving two hop of cereal per day, 20 percent of it rice and the remainder other grain. Prices of some commodities in the area were the following:

Rice, per small mal	2,200 won
Radishes, per won	120 won
Cigarettes, per pack	100 won
Socks, per pair	300 won

17. In accordance with instructions from the North Korean Ministry of Commerce in mid-November 1951, permission was given for the sale of food and clothing on the public markets in North Hamgyong, South Hamgyong, and South Pyongan Province. The sale of other commodities and materials remained the exclusive right of consumers' unions.<sup>6</sup> The general public in these provinces, however, was finding it almost impossible to secure the goods at the government-fixed prices, some of which are shown here:<sup>7</sup>

#### Cloth

Cotton cloth, white, bleached, per yard	170 won
Cotton cloth, rough, per yard	220 won (sic)
Silk, mopyonan type (heavy silk), per yard	1,500 won
Silk, for Korean skirt, per skirt	3,700 won
Silk, synthetic, per yard	600 won
Wool serge, per yard	4,500 won

#### Grain and Vegetables

Rice, per small mal	380 won
Millet, " " "	370 won
Soy beans, per small mal	240 won
Red beans, per small mal	350 won

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Green peas, per small mal	380 won
Corn, per small mal	230 won
Sesame, per small mal	160 won
Sorghum, per small mal	207 won
Garlic, per 100 bulbs	150 won
Stone leeks, per bunch	10 won
Cabbage, per kum	30 won
Radishes, per bunch of 10	15 won
Potatoes, per mal	190 won

Meat and fish

Beef, per kum	150 won
Pork, per kum	140 won
Fish, general, per kum	35 won
Herring, per kum	60 won
Herring, dried, each	7 won
Melchi, (Gan'dai), dried, per kum	320 won
Sea "tangles," per kum	130 won

Miscellaneous

Flour, per kum	70 won
Sugar, per kum	150 won
Eggs, each	5 won
Noodles, per bundle	30 won
Cigarettes, per pack	14 or 20 or 30 won
Hair cut	20 won

Trade and Commerce

18. In the Yongampo area in August, it was not possible to engage in private large scale trading. Those who did so risked being accused of profiteering. However, it was permitted to operate local "handcraft" factories, particularly such food processing enterprises as rice-cleaning mills, by obtaining permission from the provincial government through the people's committee of the district (won) concerned. Because of business taxes, which were so heavy that in some cases they were confiscatory, merchants were in great difficulty. Trading in farmland between individuals was strictly forbidden, although farmers could turn in their lands to the district government should they wish to change their occupation. The lands then would be reassigned. Private ownership of large craft, for example, sailboats more than 38 feet in length, was prohibited, but smaller boats could be freely exchanged between individuals. Possession of radios with more than four tubes was prohibited, and there was a general shortage in Yongampo. There were about 50 radios in Yongampo, some of which were owned by governmental organizations.

25X1   Comment. A "mal" or large mal, is about one-half bushel, equivalent to slightly less than 30 pounds of rice. Other Korean units of measure used in this report includes:

small mal	1/2 bushel
hop	1/3 pints
kum	8.27 pounds
kun	1.32 pounds

25X1   Comment. See paragraph 12 for a different version, which is supported by reports of another government agency, which state that units of the Chinese Communist 40 Army were collecting food levies on 16 and 17 December at Sujong-ni (126-11, 37-55) (BT 5202) and Hyokjung-ni (126-07, 37-55) (BT 1700).

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- 25X1 3 Comment. By 19 December about 90 percent of the crop in Yonbuck-gun was being taken as a food levy by North Korean troops.
- 25X1 4 Comment. Cabinet Decision No. 190 directed the confiscation and redistribution of the land of families, all or some of whose members had fled to South Korea or collaborated with United Nations forces.
- 25X1 5 Comment. Presumably these are government-sponsored "commercial," or marketing, agencies.
- 25X1 6 Comment. A Pyongyang broadcast of 10 December 1951 stated that consumers' union stores throughout North Korea were actively engaged in supplying the people with necessary stores for the winter, such as pickling salt and other supplies necessary for the preservation of fruit and vegetables during the winter months. It claimed that the quotas for the distribution of salt and preservation of the various foods had been exceeded.
- 25X1 7 Comment. In early August in the Yonbuck-gun area, a small mal of rice was between 2,000 and 2,500 won, although in Ulliyul-gun it was only about 1,000 won, according to SO-72582. In early 1950, before the war, the following were comparable statutory and open market prices for various commodities, the open market price being given in parentheses:
- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Cotton cloth, per yard   | 30 won (170)    |
| Wool cloth, per yard     | 500 won (3,000) |
| Red beans, per small mal | 35 won (190)    |
| Rice, per small mal      | 40 won (200)    |

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